

# *Elementary* ENGLISH

JANUARY 1947

Children and Radio  
By May Hill Arbuthnot

A New Department,  
Look and Listen

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

# Elementary ENGLISH

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# LEMENTARY ENGLISH

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## Children and Radio

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT<sup>1</sup>

THE LONE RANGER'S stirring battle cry, "Hi-Yo, Silver, Away!" called America's children to the radio well over a decade ago, and they have been listening spellbound ever since. This masked rider, with Tonto, the Indian, and now Dan, the young nephew, hunt down wrongdoers, rescue the persecuted, restore law and order, and are a generally modernized Western version of *Robin Hood* and his band. Silver, the Lone Ranger's glorious grey horse is almost as interesting to the children as the hero, and since Dan has been given the equally beautiful son of Silver, he is a much envied boy.

### *Adventure*

The Lone Ranger did more than summon the children to the radio. He brought the comic-strip-adventure heroes flying to the microphone also—"Terry and the Pirates," "Jack Armstrong," "Hop Harrigan," "Dick Tracy," "Captain Midnight," and many others. We are only surprised that the reverse migra-

<sup>1</sup>Division of Education, Western Reserve University. This article is a section of a forthcoming book, *Children and Books* (Scott, Foresman). Other sections will appear in succeeding issues.

tion has not occurred. Why hasn't the Lone Ranger taken to magazines? Perhaps no blown-up balloon, issuing from the mouth of the hero and enclosing the words 'Hi-Yo, Silver, Away!' can ever carry the magic of that musical and thrilling cry. No, no, while the human voice rings clear, and pounding hoof beats fall ominously on our ears, the radio heroes can stir the emotions in ways no strip can match. "Hop Harrigan" on the radio becomes even more convincing than in the comic strip because he sounds like a real American youth. When he pours out his fascinating information about planes and flying, it is doubly convincing because we can hear him. "He's really!" as the children say. He might live next door. "Captain Midnight" and his "Secret Squadron" whisper hoarsely to each other on the radio and young ears listen tensely. The ack-ack of machine guns, the beat of heavy surf on nearby rocks, the stealthy tread of approaching villains, the hissing whisper of ambushed heroes, screams, shots, roaring engines are all effectively employed to build up suspense, relieved only by the hearty, forthright voices of the heroes assuring us that all is well.

Ten years ago, anxious parents were threatening to give up their radios because of the lurid serials to which their children were listening. Gangsters and G-Men, violence, murder, and an atmosphere of horror prevailed on many programs! P.T.A. groups protested, parents were advised on ways of handling the situation in the home, juvenile audiences decreased, and improvement set in. Those who listened at random, during war years, to a sampling of these commercial adventure serials, found they were as full of noise and confusion as ever, but the element of fair play, of right triumphing over wrong, was more dominant, and murder, aside from the endless stream of adult mystery stories, had mostly given place to the patriotic violence of war, with spies, enemies, and saboteurs substituting for the old time crooks.



### *Serials and Science*

The radio serials have no literary quality, but they do sometimes carry considerable information, and make a strong appeal to the child who is interested in machines and inventions. "Jack Armstrong" has explored the ancient civilization of the Incas, tarried in Tibet and the Caribbean, and used his science and mathematics for Uncle Sam. "Terry and the Pirates" circulated in China, yielding, along with their exciting plots, considerable information about modern China and her problems. "Buck Rogers," with his fantastic adventures in the twenty-fifth century, has fired children's imaginations concerning the machines and inventions of the future. Indeed, our atomic bomb is the first modern invention to catch up with and pass far beyond the suggested scope of machines in fairy tales, comic strips, and radio serials. It is interesting to look back and see how the seven leagued boots of the fairy tales turned into trains and automobiles, flying carpets became airplanes, and the far-seeing eyes of the giant forecast the telescopes and radar. Jules Verne gave us a whole world undersea, and now "Buck Rogers" has us living five centuries ahead of ourselves. These imaginative fantasies are probably a good thing. They fire children's creative imaginations and they too have been dreaming up new machines, new inventions. But now with the atomic bomb, fact, has, for the first time, run far ahead of the wildest fancies, and the power of destruction threatens to surpass man's will to survive. It is a challenge to all the authors of fantasies. What next?

### *Crime*

At their worst these commercial radio serials addressed to children are full of blood, thunder, and noise. Characters are typed rather than individualized. The language is slangy, the plots are repetitious and melodramatic, and suspense is drawn out *ad nauseam*. At their best they may turn the listener toward machines, and they do seem, on the whole,

somewhat less objectionable than the endless flock of murder-mysteries to which adult members of the family are listening so avidly. At least there are fewer corpses in the juvenile serials, and the problems, solutions, and heroes are on a more heroic scale. Perhaps adult tastes might be improved by listening with the children.

### *News and Music*

While considering chiefly the radio fiction to which the children listen, we must not forget the fine news commentaries and the glorious music to which they may and do listen. To say that we will give up our radios because of the cheap, the melodramatic, the bloody, or the horrible programs available is about like saying we'll give up life because of its possible vulgarities, violence, and crime. Human beings have always been confronted with choices between good and evil, between the fine and the vulgar, the beautiful and the ugly. The radio offers just a few more choices. Our business is to saturate children with so much that is innocently amusing or fine and inspiring, that they will be immunized against the salacious and horrible. Our radios today offer us intellectual and aesthetic treats: news, information, entertainment, drama, music, literature—which are superb. Our business is to train children to enjoy the best, and to reject the second rate or poor. After all, the radio is *our* instrument. By a flick of the wrist we can listen to the greatest men alive today, speaking to us from all over the world. We can be wholesomely amused or stirred to the depths of our being. Which way our children dial, when they grow up, will depend in part upon our choices now, when they are still children. The radio is an instrument of great power in the education of children and adult. How do we use it?

### *Commercials*

What we dislike most about all radio programs, whether for children or adults, is the high pressure salesmanship of some of the sponsors. Advertising is legitimate, but there is a threaten-

ing note about some of the food, drink, and medicine salesmanship that is downright obnoxious. You are made to feel that if you don't eat Vigor Vigoro for breakfast, or drink Circleteen before going to bed, or take Peppy Pellets after eating, or consume Crunchy Candy Cakes for energy, your growth will be stunted, your arches will fall, and you'll lose your job or your teeth or your hair or maybe all three. Children swallow this ominous sort of propaganda hook, line, sinker, and all. If they are going to listen to such insidious nonsense, they must be thoroughly immunized against it. What radio listeners need most is a healthy skepticism, a firm resistance to fake claims and promotional threats. Such skepticism can flourish only when it is grounded in a sound understanding of basic laws of health and nutrition. Then, children and adults alike will laugh off these super-sales boys and wait, with proper cynicism, for the resumption of the story.

### *"Information Please"*

Turning from the adventure serials to other programs addressed to or enjoyed by children, again we find improvement. "The Quiz Kids" have glamorized brains, which, before their appearance at the microphone, were in considerable disrepute both with children and cartoonists. Moreover, the "Kids" refer continually to science, history, geography, current events, and children's books. Children's books, however, have not been as frequently presented, or nearly as well covered, as the others. Teachers could readily send in more and better questions on books children read, or ought to read. There is no doubt that these questions stimulate interest. "The Singing Lady" for many years maintained a high standard of selecting and telling stories for children. We need more such radio entertainment for children—programs which tie in with fine books, promote wider reading interests, and lift the child's tastes even as they entertain him. Meanwhile, our older children follow "Information Please" almost as gratefully as the oldsters.

### *Schools of the Air*

For years laymen have been expressing these needs to radio administrators but for the most part in vain. Now, all over the country, Boards of Education are taking over their own broadcasting, not merely for lessons in arithmetic, or music, or language, but for entertainment as well. *F. M. For Education* is the name of a bulletin put out by the United States Office of Education,<sup>2</sup> stating in detail the advantages of educational stations and operators. New York, Chicago, Cleveland, and San Francisco already have such stations and doubtless more will follow. Texas has long had a distinguished program on its Schools of the Air and so have other states. Wherever educational groups have assumed responsibility for such broadcasting, children's literature has gained tremendous impetus. Stories are told, poetry is read, verse choirs of children perform, dramatizations of children's stories are given by the children and these programs are enthusiastically received by the other children in the schools. Librarians testify to an immediate rush for the books containing the stories broadcast. Teachers record the children's lively discussions and requests for "more stories like that." Various activities grow out of these broadcasts—dramatizations, original compositions by the children, imaginative and vigorous art work, a desire to tell stories, greater interest in books, and decided gains in language power.

We have only begun to tap the range and possibilities of radio literature for children. We should like to hear a complete dramatization in serial form, of the *Robin Hood* stories, some of the old ballads both sung and dramatized, excerpts from *Alice In Wonderland* or *Wind in the Willows* read aloud, Christmas poetry and carols used together, much as Maud Adams used them several years ago. Verse choirs of children saying the Psalms at Thanksgiving may be startlingly beautiful

<sup>2</sup>By William Dow Boutwell. Misc. No. 7 Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

if they are kept simple, grave, and sincere. If the commercial radio has missed these possibilities, state and city Schools of the Air can realize them. Here is a chance to use the talented teacher, who reads or tells stories beautifully, and the artist teacher, who can use her children as a medium of expression either in dramatizations or verse choirs. It is a wonderful chance also to bring together the various arts, music, literature, dramatics, before the microphone, with perhaps art work and the dance in the classroom. Meanwhile, we won't be scornful of the child's favorite commercial serial over the air, his "Dick Tracy" or "Captain Midnight," but we will offer him, in the schools, something equally exciting and of a higher literary quality and social significance. Then, as with the comics, we won't be too worried over the blood and thunder, just so the child is getting a continuous exposure to good programs at the same time.

On the whole, the schools have not made half enough use of the children's tremendous interest in both radio programs and moving pictures. These are moulding, to an astonishing degree, children's tastes, attitudes, even their interest or lack of interest in books. If a teacher lets a child talk about his favorites to the class, now and then, and responds to some of his enthusiasms, it builds a common bond of interest between them. It may be desirable, occasionally, to tie current events, or geography, or history, or English, into a radio program or a fine moving picture, when such a combination is possible and worthwhile. This is only to recognize the best in these fields, and to give it adult prestige. It is well also to praise children when they recognize a good production, and develop gradually, from the children themselves, some standards for both these fields of entertainment, radio and moving pictures. Children are keenly critical too. They are quick to sense anything artificial or pretentious. They will mimic affected radio diction, or resent a too beauteous movie hero. They are equally quick



to recognize something genuine. Why not capitalize, then, both on their good sense and their interest?

—Try a bulletin board for recommended radio programs; those which the children have evaluated and consider good. See that different fields of interest are represented, and changed frequently to take care of timely or special offerings. Do the same for the moving pictures, and such a bulletin will help to keep you up to date and alive to any possible correlation with your subject matter fields. But most important, the discussions and evaluations of programs for such bulletin boards will help breed more discriminating consumers of both radio and movies for the years to come.

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#### WHAT KIND OF RURAL EDUCATION DOES THE NATION HAVE?

The great part rural education plays in American life is suggested by these facts:

43% of our people live in rural areas (56,245,573).

Of those in rural areas 30,216,188 *live on farms*; 26,029,385 *live in towns* under 2,500 population.

*More than half* (15,041,289) of the children of school age (5-17) live in rural areas (Total 29,745,246).

Of the children enrolled in school 46.4% are in rural schools.

*More than half* (437,031) of the elementary and secondary school teachers work in rural schools (Total: 856,661).

86% of the nation's school buildings are in rural school systems.

—"many of the best and most of the poorest schools in the nation are found in our rural areas. When, however, rural schools as a class are compared with urban schools as a class it is an inescapable conclusion that millions of rural children are seriously handicapped in the educational opportunities available to them."

3½ million children of school age in rural communities are not enrolled in school.



# Double Is Nothing

JULIUS C. BERNSTEIN\*

COLLOQUIAL ENGLISH seems to have an indigenous and unswerving affection for the double negative. Although, as a construction, the double (or, for that matter, the multiple) negative ranks high in the English teachers' lists of solecisms the common speech employs it in all forms with freedom and frequency. In fact, even in formal discourse, the double negative has its place, and to set an absolute prohibition on it is to lose an effective rhetorical instrument.

We must not fall into the error of assuming that all double negatives are in bad usage. One form of literary understatement native to English is composed of just such a construction:

We were not ungrateful.  
Such ideas are not uncommon.  
His reward was not inconsiderable.  
He is not unworthy of the honor.  
She was not unkind to me.  
His claim was not without merit.

Though Fowler, for example, in agreement with other authorities, deplors this approach as precious or overelegant and suggests avoiding it, he admits that it is valid and even "congenial to the English temperament" and idiom.<sup>1</sup> Such doubling may be circumlocutionary, but it is definitely allowable.

The Leonard study, *Current English Usage*, established yet another type of double negative on the intermediate ground of "disputable."<sup>2</sup> The examples are:

We haven't but a few left.  
I can't help but eat it.

\*Written for the National Council's Committee on Current English Usage. This article is reprinted from the December, 1945, issue of the *English Journal*.

<sup>1</sup>*Modern English Usage*, pp. 382-83.

<sup>2</sup>P. 130.

However, Marckwardt and Walcott, in their supplementary discussion, list the latter as "Literary English,"<sup>3</sup> while Curme finds some extenuation for the former on the ground that *but* is often felt to have little negative force and so needs aid.<sup>4</sup> Of course, such doublets as *hadn't hardly*, *hadn't scarcely*, or *hadn't only* are unquestionably taboo, although it might well be pointed out here that, like *but*, these adverbs carry little negative force or meaning and hence, to the casual speaker or writer, may need additional negative support.

Yet another form of the repeated negative is in good usage:

No, I don't want any.

Regardless of any arguments that may be advanced on grammatical, rhetorical, or syntactical grounds, the fact remains that such a sentence as the foregoing is in multiple negation—as is the vehement "No, no, a thousand times no!"—yet they are in good use, formal or otherwise.

Let us now consider the double and multiple cases in which a speaker or writer uses a sentence with two or more of the following: *no*, *not*, *nothing*, *none*, *never*, *neither*, and *nor*. Standard works on grammar are very explicit on this point, and doubling is flatly and unanimously condemned. The approach is logical: If you *haven't nothing*, then you have *something*. This same reasoned analysis of the multiple negative by Latin-minded grammarians and logical school teachers led, in the history of our language, to the formal outlawing of a psychologically and historically normal construction.<sup>5</sup>

That rule holds, despite the fact that, carried to its logical conclusion, if even-numbered negatives are affirmations, then odd-numbered negatives must still be negations.<sup>6</sup> Thus, a triple negative would still be a negative, while "No, no, a thousand times no," which comes to 1,002 negatives, is therefore an affirmation, so that the lady in the song is unwittingly issuing an invitation to her lupine pursuer.

<sup>3</sup>*Facts about Current English Usage*, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup>*Syntax*, p. 140.

<sup>5</sup>Jespersen, *Modern English Grammar*, V. 451; Aiken, *Commonsense Grammar*, p. 246; Sweet, *New English Grammar*, Part I, p. 438.

<sup>6</sup>Aiken, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-33.

This is all chop logic. Surely, as Hayakawa points out, no court would regard "I haven't killed nobody" as a confession of guilt, i. e., that the speaker *had* killed *somebody*.<sup>7</sup> To quote Greenough and Kittredge: "Two negatives may make an affirmative in logic but they seldom do in English."<sup>8</sup>

A rhetorician, it seems to me, should impeach the multiple negation on the ground of redundancy. It is a repetitious and uneconomical usage and actually unnecessary. Although Fowler disapproves of the double negative in his *Modern English Usage*, he does so on the ground that it is pleonastic. Mrs. Aiken expresses the same objection,<sup>10</sup> and so do most teachers of rhetoric. The second, third, and fourth negatives in line are certainly superfluous.

On a historical basis, however, the multiple negative has standing as an indigenous part of our language or, for that matter, of many languages<sup>11</sup> (cf. the Spaniard's *No se mada de naldie*). In Old English, negatives were often prefixed to the verb as well as to other words in the sentence that admitted of contracted forms. If there were none, an extra negative might be added.<sup>12</sup> Chaucer's multiple negations were legion, and Shakespeare has had dozens deleted by his modern editors. Both Marckwardt and Jespersen cite numerous examples of this tendency in great writers, even of the not-too-distant past.

Nor are the writers of the past alone in this respect. Curme and Jespersen find modern writers using the double negative, and the Fowlers have a section of *The King's English* filled with delicious examples taken from prominent modern sources.<sup>13</sup> In these cases the extra negative has often been added for negative force where needed.

Actually, this desire for intensification is the underlying cause of most multiple negatives. A child yells, "No, no, no, . . ." as if the accumulation of negation were a bulwark against frustration

<sup>7</sup>*Language in Action*, p. 225.

<sup>8</sup>*Words and Their Ways*.

<sup>9</sup>P. 383.

<sup>10</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>11</sup>Jespersen, *op. cit.*, p. 450; see also Hall, *English Usage*, pp. 75-77.

<sup>12</sup>Sweet, *op. cit.*, pp. 437-38.

<sup>13</sup>Pp. 332-34.

or pain. Curme compares multiple negation to driving "two or three nails instead of one, feeling that they will hold better than one."<sup>14</sup> Jespersen notes "this heaping of negatives" because of the speaker's fear that "if the negation were expressed once only, it might be easily overlooked. . . . He spreads. . . . a thin layer of negative colouring over the whole of the sentence. . . . This may be called pleonastic, but it is really not illogical."<sup>15</sup>

Any student or teacher of English will testify to the widespread colloquial use of the double negative.<sup>16</sup> Mencken goes so far as to say: "In Vulgar American, the double negative is so freely used that the simple negative appears to have been almost abandoned",<sup>17</sup> but this statement is obviously hyperbolic and epigrammatic. More scientific studies like that in the *Linguistic Atlas of New England*, Volume II, indicate that the multiple negative is normally avoided by the overwhelming majority of cultured people interviewed, although about 50 per cent of New Englanders at large use it "frequently." Such evidence is far more dependable and temperate than Mencken's.

Certain conclusions about the double negative are inescapable: (1) In certain usages, the double negative is valid and correct, although somewhat artificial; (2) although educated usage eschews the double negative, a large segment of our population employs it frequently in colloquial usage; (3) grammatical handbooks and teachers of English almost unanimously condemn the double negative; (4) cumulative negation has a valid historical basis in English, as well as a strong psychological justification; (5) in language, two negatives do *not* necessarily make a positive; (6) the double negative is avoided in educated usage in periodicals, books, essays, speeches, conversation, radio programs, and even casual talk.

Until a heavy weight of evidence can be cited to the contrary, the double negative stands as an interesting construction in English, deep-seated in the vulgate but pruned out of general cultivated language.

<sup>14</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 139.

<sup>15</sup>*Essentials of English Grammar*, p. 302.

<sup>16</sup>See Aiken, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

<sup>17</sup>*The American Language* (4th ed.), p. 468.

# Adventures in Free Reading

ETHEL L. BRECHT<sup>1</sup>

OUR SCHOOL is located in a factory district between the Goodrich and the Firestone Rubber Companies. There is an unusually fine spirit of cooperation between the school and its patrons. More money is raised at school carnivals than in the districts where there is more money. A good percentage of the money is used to buy books which are divided between the school library and the reading rooms. This program could not be carried on without this cooperation.

Eight seventh and eighth grade groups have one hundred fifty minutes per week each for free reading. They may choose from about three hundred volumes in the reading rooms or they may bring books from the public library or the school library.

In September every boy and girl has a standard reading test. No event is looked forward to more than the announcement of the result of the reading tests. If a child who is below standard for his grade group reads eighteen books, which is the requirement for the year, he may have a second test.

Since the chief aim of a free reading program is enjoyment, we try to avoid the "thou shalt read" situation. We have found, however, that when children whose interests are few would restrict themselves to just "dog stories," "twin stories," or other single interests realize that they can not raise their reading grades by this kind of reading, they are usually glad to be guided into wider reading interests. From the dog story they may go to the animal stories of Mukerji, to Kipling and then to other interests, school stories and sports, adventures in other countries and popular travel books.

<sup>1</sup>Lincoln School, Akron, Ohio.

The popular vocational story and the pioneer story are excellent stepping stones to biography reading.

During the past year special attention has been given to non-fiction reading. The group that completed eighth grade this year (averaging about one hundred and thirty-five children) read a total of three hundred sixty-seven biographies during two years. The seventh group which averaged about one hundred sixty members read three hundred sixty-three biographies.

The most popular biographies have been *Adventures of Buffalo Bill* by Cody, *Daniel Boone* by James Daugherty, *Davy Crockett* by Rourke, *Invincible Louisa* by Meigs, *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller, and the biographies of Haydn, Schubert, Bach, and Mozart by Wheeler and Deucher.

Other popular non-fiction represents a variety of interests. *It's Fun to Cook* by Maltby is popular with both boys and girls. Books about aviation and sports are favorites. Etiquette and personality books are especially popular with girls. Many boys read them and I frequently see them inside another book for many boys are reluctant to admit such interests. And of course books about war machines are most popular.

A boy with low reading ability was a problem because he seemed to have no reading interests. I saw him take *Play the Game* by Charnley from the shelf, and to my amazement he seemed thoroughly interested at once. Near the end of the period he looked up and said, "Miss B——, this book is about real people!"

A very shy little girl who came from a home where she was constantly reminded of her queer ways made this comment about *Listening* by Kate Seredy:



"I liked this book because it was so full of the things I have never had—cats and dogs, a house among the trees, a place where two boys and a girl were exceptionally happy."

The influence of this reading program is reflected in the homes. A group of mothers were entertaining the teachers. One mother said, "James has enjoyed reading *The Man Without a Country* so much. He has been discussing it with his father and me."

Another girl said, "My mother is thankful that we came to Lincoln School because we have learned to read for pleasure and do not fuss about something to do when we are at home."

One more example of the pleasure that has been given through our reading program is the story of Alice. She was an underprivileged child almost fifteen years old when she came to us. Her I.Q. was 78 and her reading test showed third grade ability. She hated school. I got special books for her, but few books of third grade level have any interest for a fifteen year old child. Finally one of the children gave her *Star, the Story of an Indian Pony* by Hooker. She had lived in the country and liked horses. She wanted another horse story, and about Christmas time she had exhausted our supply of horse stories. Then she went to the public library. She is now in high school taking a general course. When I talked to her last, she said that she had her fourth library card and had read all books she could find about horses and had just finished *Gone With the Wind*. She said that she often got books that she didn't care for, but she was getting satisfaction or she would not have been a regular visitor at the library.

A record is kept for each child. Many children keep records also. Book reports are simple. They are asked to note the author and the illustrator and to tell why they liked or did not like the book. The following are typical reports.

## HONEY JANE

by May Justus

"I liked this book because it told how kind Jane was. When I read the part where Jane went to Alec Oliver's alone after school, I believe I was more scared than she was. It was very interesting and had a great deal of bravery in it." (seventh grade)

## TREVE

by Terhune

"I liked this book because it tells of the wonderful spirit of a dog. It tells how some men can be so merciless as to poison a dog. It also tells how a man can be so grouchy appearing on the exterior but so kind on the inside. This is about the best book that I have ever read." (eighth grade boy)

The following report was given by a bright eighth grade boy who tried to impress one with his badness because he didn't want to be thought a sissy.

## TREASURE IN THE LITTLE TRUNK

by Helen Orton

"This book written by Helen Orton is the first woman written book I have read. This book was enjoyable and could be easily understood. Some say that the book is for girls and that if boys read it they are sissies. If they read this book they will have a change of heart. It is the story of a pioneer family who had a fine home and friends but gave them up and moved into the wilderness. When I read these adventures, I thought I was with them."

Reports like the above have made me very cautious about labeling books by grade, for boys or girls, or as adventure for almost all books are subject to different classifications. I try to make the child's interest the basis of recommendation.

The children use the book lists of the National Council of Teachers of English, the A.L.A. graded list, the lists from Milton, Massachusetts, and others. They know the books that have won the Newbery Award and are quick to note books that have been Junior Literary Guild selections.

The circulating libraries at the corner drug store and the horror magazines on every news stand are an indictment of the public schools where children have learned *how* to read but not *what* to read. Only an opportunity to read wholesome books written for the child can create a taste for and the habit of reading good books.

## BOOKS MENTIONED

ADVENTURES OF BUFFALO BILL .....	Will Cody
Harper	
DANIEL BOONE .....	James Daugherty
Viking Press	
DAVY CROCKETT .....	Constance Rourke
Harcourt	
INVINCIBLE LOUISA .....	Cornelia Mcigs
Little	
THE STORY OF MY LIFE .....	Helen Keller
Grossett	
JOSEPH HAYDEN, THE MERRY LITTLE PEASANT .....	Wheeler & Deucher
Dutton	
SEBASTIAN BACH, THE BOY FROM THURINGIA	
MOZART THE WONDER BOY	
FRANZ SCHUBERT AND HIS MERRY FRIENDS	
PLAY THE GAME, THE BOOK OF SPORT .....	Mitchell Charnley
Viking Press	
LISTENING .....	Kate Sereby
Viking Press	
STAR; THE STORY OF AN INDIAN PONY .....	F. C. Hooker
Doubleday	
HONEY JANE .....	May Justus
Doubleday	
TREVE .....	Albert Terhune
Dutton	
TREASURE IN THE LITTLE TRUNK .....	Helen Orton
Stokes	

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# They Speak Out — Protests Against Books About Other Peoples

AZILE WOFFORD<sup>1</sup>

THE COMMITTEE on Standards for Books about Children of Other Lands for the National Council of Teachers of English, in evolving a set of criteria, has been interested in what has already been said which might serve as a basis for such standards. What do representatives of other nations, or other races, for instance, object to in books about themselves? What do they consider as desirable values in such books? What criteria are suggested for writing or choosing them?

Much of the material in print along this line relates to books about Negroes. A letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, October 20, 1942, signed by Louis Adamic, Gordon W. Allport, C. L. Golightly, Mark Stoer, Ordway Tead, and Henry P. Van Deusen lists a number of situations wherein white people most offend the feelings of Negroes. Some of these are applicable to books and, in substance, are as follows:

1. Failure to capitalize the word Negro, like Jew or Italian.
2. Addressing Negroes without the title of Mr., Mrs., and Miss, or using familiar names like Auntie, Uncle, etc.
3. Using epithets like "nigger" and "darky."
4. Telling sentimental tales about one's "old black mammy."
5. Treating all Negroes as if they were servants.
6. Portrayal in movies of Negroes as either servant, buffoon, or criminal.

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Library Science Department, University of Kentucky. Written for the Committee on Standards for Books about Children of Other Lands.

Dorothy S. Manley of the School of Library Science at the North Carolina College for Negroes in Durham, N. C., in discussing "Improving Racial Attitudes Through Children's Books,"<sup>2</sup> decries the use of such terms as "nigger," "coon," "pickaninny," and "darky" in books about Negroes. She also says: "Books which portray the Negro as religious, good-hearted, and good-natured, but inferior because of his superstition, irresponsibility and laziness contribute nothing toward the building of a better world."

Charlemae Rollins, children's librarian at the Hall Branch of the Chicago Public Library, in an article "Children's Books on the Negro: To Help Build a Better World,"<sup>3</sup> deplores the emphasis on shiftlessness and superstition as Negro traits. However, she finds it gratifying that the type of book is being "superseded by books of more varied phases of Negro life." Lists of books recommended and those not-recommended are included in her discussion. One is struck by the minuteness with which such books have evidently been scrutinized for their treatment of the Negro. One may also be amazed to find on the "taboo" list certain titles which librarians and teachers have previously used in good faith with children. Mrs. Rollins' suggestions as to "How to Evaluate Books About Other Races" are presented here for their bearing on the topic in hand:

1. Does this book or story portray the true characteristics of the people? Or does it present a distorted view?
2. Is this a true picture of life as a whole? Is it merely a nostalgic yearning for a romantic kind of experience which merely distorts the present?
3. Are the illustrations true to life? Or do they caricature or ridicule the race or group they represent?

<sup>2</sup>*Elementary English Review*, Nov. 1944, pp. 267-69.

<sup>3</sup>*Elementary English Review*, Oct. 1943, pp. 219-23.

4. Do the characters speak in a language true to the period or section in which they live? Or is it a dialect that is overdrawn or inconsistent? Is it too hard in spelling or form for the average child reader to follow easily?
5. Does the story give a broader understanding of the democratic way of life? Or is it patronizing and condescending in stressing differences of class, race, or religion?

In the introduction to her list of books about Negroes, *We Build Together*,<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Rollins sets forth a similar set of criteria for judging books about Negroes for young people. Under the heading "What Books Shall We Choose?", Mrs. Rollins discusses books which portray the Negro realistically, those which present distorted concepts, books of defeatism, protest and conflict, and books building more democratic attitudes. In this discussion, many individual titles are cited with designation as to whether or not they are acceptable to Negro readers and why. The list itself is well-chosen and comprehensive and might well be checked by librarians and teachers choosing books about Negroes for young readers.

Howard Fast, himself a Jew, speaks out for minority groups in an article entitled "Rules for Tolerance" in the July, 1944, issue of *Harper's Bazaar*. In discussing what can be done toward giving children right concepts of interracial and international understanding, he suggests the following, much of which bears on the topic at hand:

1. Never use derogatory terms; never think them, if possible; never permit them in your home.
2. Don't discriminate in your casual conversation.
3. Don't suggest religious or racial differences to your children.

<sup>4</sup>Published by National Council of Teachers of English, 1940.



4. Don't bear the anti-Negro or anti-Semitic or anti-Catholic story in embarrassed silence; talk up hotly and intelligently, and if it means losing a friend—and not a too worth-while one—it also means shaping your listening children into better human material.

Marie Lien, assistant professor of art education and lecturer on intercultural education at the University of Minnesota, points out some errors in a "combination unit on Sweden-Norway-Denmark" popularly used in schools and designed, according to the publishers, "to broaden and enrich the child's reading experiences."<sup>5</sup>

Also presented is a letter of protest, prepared by Miss Lien in collaboration with Dr. Theodore Jorgensen, Chairman of the Norwegian Language and Literature Department of St. Olaf College, and sent to the educational publishers of the unit from the Scandinavian section of the Minnesota Education Association. This letter suggests that:

1. In depicting any social or historical feature of a nation, one should use great care to insure correct and proper judgment on the part of students who have never been in those lands.
2. Printed material should be submitted to competent authorities and checked by representatives of national groups concerned.

In the discussion of books, Miss Lien raises objection because it "certainly contributes in no way to a true conception of a modern people living in a highly progressive society" to the picture-book *Ola*, which would probably be found on the shelves of most libraries for children.

<sup>5</sup>"The New Intercultural Education: Facts on Chauvinistic Myths." *Elementary English Review*, March, 1944, pp. 111-13.

A survey of educational literature reveals a wealth of material on the subject of intercultural education; how children in homes and in schools may be taught to understand children of other races, nations and creeds. That books, both text-books and others, will play a large part in this program of intercultural education, no one doubts. While the things stressed above are largely negative, they do point out some of the things which might be avoided in books about children of other lands and should have significance in recommending such books for young readers.

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The March of Time has announced a simplified plan for the more effective distribution of its popular Forum Edition Series. These 16 mm. sound releases have heretofore been available from the publisher on a subscription or special rental basis, but they may now be obtained from University and local film libraries throughout the country—by direct application or through the March of Time, which will channel any inquiry to the nearest distributor.

The prints held by libraries will be leased but not sold outright by the March of Time in order that films may be called in for periodic re-editing and repair, when necessary. In all, there are 26 subjects available—for each of which there is a special Discussion Outline to aid users in previewing and study.

The latest Series M includes these new titles: "The Philippine Republic", "The Pacific Coast", "Greece", "Palestine", "Italy", "Britain and Her Empire" "Music in America" which deals with the development of interest in all types of music, and "Life with Baby" which was taken under the direction of Dr. Arnold Gessell at his celebrated Yale University Clinic.

A booklet describing the new films and the 18 previously issued may be obtained from your local film library or from the March of Time Forum Edition, Dept. D, 369 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.

# A Children's Book Quiz

FLORENCE A. GRITZNER<sup>1</sup>

(All of these authors have written children's books sometime within the last twelve years.)

1. What English poet writes about fairies that live in her home and garden? (Rose Fyleman)
2. Which of Rachel Field's characters was found in an antique shop? (Hitty, in *Hitty: her First Hundred Years*)
3. What book, featuring a dog as a hero, has been made into an appealing motion picture? (*Lassie, Come-home* by Eric Knight)
4. Who made many animal twins, also Nicodemus and his little sister, famous? (Inez Hogan)
5. Which of Carol Ryrie Brink's pioneer characters found it much easier to be a tomboy than a lady? (Caddie Woodlawn)
6. Can you name two anthologies that contain the word "silver" in their titles? (*Sung Under the Silver Umbrella*, A. C. E., 1936, *More Silver Pennies*, 1938, or [*Silver Pennies*] by Blanche Jennings Thompson)
7. What animal character would rather smell flowers than fight? (Ferdinand, in *Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf)
8. Who wrote many books about twin children of different nationalities? (Lucy Fitch Perkins)
9. What author depicts early American life in such books as *Little House in the Big Woods*? (Laura Ingalls Wilder)
10. What animal character was created by Felix Salten and made famous by Walt Disney? (Bambi)
11. In what book are great numbers of cats involved? (*Millions of Cats* by Wanda Gág)

<sup>1</sup>Principal of the Hayes School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

12. What are the Christian names of the husband-wife team, "the Petershams", who illustrate many children's books? (Maud and Miska)
13. Who created the character, Winnie the Pooh? (A. A. Milne)
14. On what street did very strange things take place? (*And to Think I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, by Theodore Seuss Geisel [Dr. Seuss])
15. Who wrote about the adventures of Angus, the little Scotch terrier? (Marjorie Flack)
16. To what book, by Elizabeth Jane Coatsworth, is *Five Bushel Farm*, a sequel? (*Away Goes Sally*)
17. Who has written about America "the land they live in for the children who live there"? (Lucy Sprague Mitchell)
18. Maj Lindman wrote about three little girls, Flicka, Ricka and Dicka. About what three little boys did he also write? (Snipp, Snapp and Snurr)
19. What children's magazine has the same title as a well-known nursery rhyme? (*Jack and Jill*, published by the Curtis Co.)
20. Was Scuttlebutt a rabbit, a dog, or a kitten? (a dog, in *Scuttlebutt and the Carrier Kitten*, as suggested by Lt. Dwight W. Follett, U. S. N. R. to Margaret Friskey)
21. What author-illustrator traveled extensively to get his material for such books as *The Story about Ping*? (Kurt Wiese)
22. In what book does a very large animal hatch an egg for a very lazy bird? (*Horton Hatches the Egg*, by Dr. Seuss)
23. What book, written and illustrated by Mrs. Margot Austin, tells about a very small boy, a dog and a country circus? (*Barney's Adventures*)
24. Mrs. Marie Simchow Sterns illustrated a book of Christmas carols. Can you give the pseudonym of Mrs. Stern? (Masha)
25. What book, written by Lois Lenski, won the Newbery Medal Award for 1946? (*Strawberry Girl*)

# Guided Free Reading in The Classroom

OPAL FRENCH<sup>1</sup>

**M**OST PUPILS ENJOY an hour of free reading. This hour may be spent in the school library once each week under the supervision of the classroom teacher who accompanies them to the library, or it may be enjoyed in the English classroom. In the latter case the librarian sends books directly to the classroom. Other practices may be observed in different schools, but the point in question is whether the pupils really benefit from and enjoy this hour.

If left to themselves during this free reading period, the natural readers are happy to select books of their own choice. Their reading interests are already developed. What they need is guidance in discrimination and in broadening their reading tastes.

The slow reader and the pupil of low-ability need stimulation, encouragement, and sympathetic understanding. They usually lack confidence in their own ability to select books. Without friendly direction by the teacher and her personal interest, they are likely to consider free reading no pleasure.

Children must be permitted free choice in their reading, but it is necessary for the teacher to guide that choice. She must see that that choice grows steadily better.

## *Responsibility of the Teacher*

As a teacher of reading in grades seven and eight, I was challenged by this task of guiding pupils to find real enjoyment in free reading. Could I awaken the interests of the slow reader and broaden the interests of the normal reader?

<sup>1</sup>English teacher in grades 7 and 8 at Tolleston School, Gary, Indiana.

But in my six English classes averaging forty-two pupils per class, giving individual guidance presented a difficult problem. I discussed the problem with the librarian of the junior library. She readily agreed to lend us as many library books as we wanted and to let us keep them in the English classroom for an indefinite period. She planned to send us books that ranged from easy reading below seventh and eighth grade level to books of our grade level.

I began by taking an inventory of my pupils' interests, reactions, and experiences. This inventory included questions concerning their hobbies, movie and radio tastes, favorite pastimes and games, favorite books, magazines and comic strips, favorite sports, and the amount of time devoted to each. Daily diaries (confidential) written by the pupils served to enlighten me concerning each pupil's problems, interests, and needs. Then I examined their life-history cards for information concerning I. Q.'s, past test performances, home conditions, and health.

### *Providing Books and Magazines*

With this information ready for use in directing their reading, the next step was to supply a wide variety of reading materials. The pupils listed the types of stories they preferred, and the names of books they wanted to read. They elected classmates to serve as head "librarian" and assistant "librarian," respectively. These "librarians" went to the junior library, explained their errand, and presented their book selections to the librarian in charge. With the help of other classmates, whom they chose, they carried nearly one-hundred books to the English classroom. It was their responsibility to arrange the books, list them alphabetically by authors, and to check them for the correct number on hand at the end of each hour. Whenever a pupil wished to read more stories of a certain type, he talked to the



class "librarian." The class "librarian" accompanied him to the school library where he made his own selection. The class "librarian" then added the name of this book or magazine to the list on hand.

### *Group Divisions and Procedures*

The seats in the classroom were arranged in five groups, and for convenience called "Monday," "Tuesday," "Wednesday," "Thursday," and "Friday" groups. On the basis of past performances on tests the pupils were assigned to these groups. These groups fell into this general arrangement:

"Monday" group—excellent readers

"Tuesday" group—above average readers

"Wednesday" group—average readers

"Thursday" group—below average readers

"Friday" group—poor readers

The pupils were not aware of this arrangement, and were regrouped as the teacher noted their needs, interests, and abilities. The bulk of the oral work was done by the "Monday" group on Mondays, by the "Tuesday" group on Tuesdays, and so on.

The pupils selected the books of their own choice and began to read. The slow reader needed particular encouragement, and the belief that I was really interested in his choice of a book. I recommended only those books on a reading level that this pupil could enjoy, and spent much time looking at the illustrations with him and listening to him read a page or two aloud to me.

When a pupil finished a book, he filled out a reading record like the one below:

Name—Helen Price

Date—Oct. 12, 1946

Class—28-7A

Name of book—*Sky Hostess*

Author—Betty Peckham

Vocabulary—

*destination*—the place set for the end of a trip.

*schedule*—a timetable

My opinion of this book—

I want to be an airplane hostess when I am old enough. This book tells me my duties, some exciting experiences I would have, how much money I would make, and what I must learn. It also shows some good pictures of airplane hostesses on real airplanes. It is good because it tells me things I want to know.

He discussed his reading record with me and I was generous with praise and recognition of his work and progress. During these private discussions we talked in a natural, conversational manner. I wanted the pupil to feel successful, happy, and enthusiastic, and especially eager to improve his evaluation of his book. He took pride in writing his records since they were to be used by other pupils in helping them select good books. These talks afforded an excellent opportunity to build up the child's literary tastes. (Finding words for the vocabulary heading was entirely optional but some pupils enjoyed looking up and remembering new words. Their enthusiasm was contagious and caused other pupils to take an interest in new words.)

On Monday, the members of the "Monday" group arranged their seats in a circle and I joined the circle. Each pupil

told about the book he had just read. The situation was made as easy, natural, and informal as possible. Nervous tension had to be eliminated. As the pupils talked, they told of real personal experiences and characters comparable to the book characters and experiences. They began to loosen up, to feel a sense of security, self-respect, self-reliance, and importance. At no time was competition with members of the group encouraged. Only competition with self was mentioned. We were all generous with praise, and I, as their teacher, had to enter the discussion as a member who showed sincere enthusiasm and interest.

In the slower groups we read aloud and showed illustrations to quicken interest. (In the better groups the oral reading was interpretive.) Questions about and real interest in the story told, gave these pupils confidence. If they wished, they could "listen-in" when other pupils in other groups discussed their stories. All pupils were elated when they succeeded in "selling" a favorite book to other pupils.

After each of the groups had held discussion periods and talked about their reading interests, they decided to make bibliographies of books on certain subjects. Pupils volunteered for the task. Sometimes several pupils who were interested in the same subject worked together. They prepared their lists from books available in the junior library, their classroom, and suggestions from their classmates.

Each week the members of one group were responsible for advertising books on the bulletin board. They did this with book jackets brought from the library, a display of their reading records, and original picture drawings and book lists. No attempt was made to influence the display. The group chairman and his members were in complete charge.

As a concluding activity, to round-out the free reading period, we planned to make a book of our own in which every

pupil in each English class could advertise a favorite book. Sample book reports were read and discussed as to content and form. Then each pupil wrote his report. An "assistant," an appointed member of his group, helped him edit his paper. A list of points to check during the editing was written on the blackboard. As their teacher, I acted only as an adviser; I did not change the content or form of any paper. Every pupil's report, regardless of its merits, was included in this book. An elected committee arranged the reports alphabetically by the pupils' names and made a table of contents.

How proud they were of this book! It was fun for them to see their work after it was typewritten by members of the high school typing class! Pupils vied with one another to reach the room first and read the reports. They begged to read and talk more about their favorite books. This book, so much in demand, was an excellent means of advertising favorite stories.

### Outcomes

This free-reading activity was thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils. They wanted to continue it indefinitely, saying it was "fun" and that the hour went too fast. As a result of guidance and sharing reading experiences they began to realize that books were full of information and enjoyment and that book characters had problems and experiences much like their own.

At this age pupils like to participate in groups where they work happily together. In this activity opportunities were provided for pupils *to talk with other children* about their books. As they gave a variety of viewpoints on a certain topic or type of story, they developed a small degree of critical reading and thinking.

Certain skills and habits were developed. In the "My opinion of this book," on the individual reading records, the pupils

developed some skill in evaluating stories. Incidentally, the pupils developed sentence sense, sentence variety, and sentence structure in this written paragraph. They observed the use of capital letters in writing book titles and names. They gained confidence and practice in reading orally when they selected and read aloud passages for interpretive reading. Finally, they learned the art of being intelligent listeners, and of working democratically together as they gained the power to participate in group conversation courteously, attentively, without argument, and in pleasant speaking voices.

As English teachers, we must guide the child's free reading in such a way that his reading interests will be permanent—not just a classroom free-reading hour without any guidance. To do this in the classroom we may conclude that (1) to interest pupils in reading the librarian and the teacher must work together, (2) they must provide a variety of books and magazines that meet the pupil's interests, (3) they must not influence a pupil to take a certain book, but must gladly give encouragement if he needs help in making a selection, (4) they must quicken the interest of the slow reader and improve the tastes of the natural reader, (5) they must give each pupil an opportunity to share his reading experiences and to take an active part in each reading activity, and finally, (6) they must keep working at the difficult task of directing the pupil's reading without interfering with his free choice of books.

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# A Graveyard For Slang

DON A. SMITH<sup>1</sup>

DURING ONE OF my early years of teaching in elementary grades I was asked to participate in a campaign to eradicate slang and poor grammar among pupils. I drilled the pupils on tense, number, case, and antecedents, by the hour for weeks. We worked hard to obliterate the double negative. We parsed sentences conscientiously and laboriously; and then we were ready for a written examination. Everyone passed the test with flying colors. I was elated until the next day when Johnny remarked, "I ain't got no paper back yet, teacher."

Poor Johnny had spoken eight short words and at the same time had crumpled my work of yesterday and my hope for tomorrow. In fact, it seemed that he had shattered my belief in myself. As I gazed out of the window upon the cemetery across the road, an idea flashed through my weary brain. Why couldn't we start a graveyard for grammatical errors?

As this plan materialized each pupil chose an oral expression which he thought that he should bury. Then if the pupil succeeded entirely in avoiding the expression for a week, the grammatical error was buried with due solemnity, and a tombstone was erected in our new graveyard. After three weeks of hard work Johnny erected his first tombstone with the fitting epitaph, "Here lies Mr. Ain't who died from overwork." Yes, there were some resurrections from the dead, but they were only ghosts who occasionally came back to haunt us.

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<sup>1</sup>Roosevelt School, Ferndale, Mich.



# Do Your Pupils Enjoy Poetry?

MABEL W. TUCKER<sup>1</sup>

"AW, I HATE poetry!" is a cry familiar to nearly all teachers, and these teachers realize that they have another problem to hurdle before they dare set out to read, study, or try to profit by work on a poem.

Does the child's antagonistic viewpoint make the teacher feel that she is dealing with an insensitive being, who innately has no respect for the beautiful, the fine things of life, or does she make an effort to analyze the reason why most children voice an aversion to poetry?

First of all, poetry is more difficult to understand than is prose. For the sake of rhythm and rhyme, the order of words natural to the child, is often changed. Sometimes the subject is far removed from its verb; modifiers are changed about. The child is confused by the unusual word relationship; he finds the meaning obscure and his first aversion asserts itself. It is only reasonable to admit that no one enjoys the things that he does not understand.

Much poetry that is forced upon pupils is so far removed from their interests that to them it is "silly." A boy scoffs at the sentimental verses of the flowers and leaves and trees. Of course he knows they are about him, but they have no poetic lure. Poems of the great loves of the ages are not for him! They are just plain "sissy stuff."

It would appear, then, that the poems to be taught must be more carefully selected by the teacher, so that they fit into the lives and interests of the pupils. They must be poems that can be paraphrased by the child and teacher and can be made understandable and alive to him.

<sup>1</sup>Lake City Elementary School, Seattle, Wash.

Poetry is music—the music of our language. It has rhythm, expression, volume. It must be spoken loudly, softly, gayly, with pathos, exuberantly, wildly and calmly. One must be trained to read poetry, even as one learns to play the piano or to sing. Do not expect pupils to read poetry merely because it is composed of the written words which they have previously learned. One does not read facts alone into poetry. One reads emotion and thoughts. Do not expect a child to “play” a poetry “concerto” unless he has been trained step by step in the techniques of interpretation which will bring understanding and enjoyment.

### *Themes for Poetry*

What types of poems shall the teacher choose for her group? Well about what do poets write? The things they love, the memories dear to their hearts, the things they see about them which tug at their emotions and the subjects of their poems. Therein lies one of the joys of poetry, for the poets offer selections to satisfy any desire, any mood, any whim.

The teacher may choose from these the very thing the pupil loves. There are his country and his flag. There are animal poems to remind him of his pets. There are lines about a precious baby sister, an airplane pilot, a fisherman, the swimming hole, sailing, and even sports.

His favorite holidays (including vacation) present him with alive, appealing material in poetic form. Many, many, stories that thrill him are written into poems. How much more meaningful and enjoyable will be “The Ride of Paul Revere” if he reads it while he studies the Revolutionary War. How much greater will be his emotion at “O Captain, My Captain” if he reads it in history class along with the pathetic story of President Lincoln’s assassination.

Does the teacher seize the opportunity to teach the poem in the setting so naturally provided for it? If she does, the

poem is no longer far removed from the child's interest. Rather, he is warm and alive with interest and emotion. The lines are meaningful to him because he has their setting and background which invoke a receptive mood within him. An understanding of the poem and the proper interpretation of it will bring enjoyment to the reader.

Does the teacher herself read poems to her group? Does she read them with such expression and feeling that the pupils catch the mood of the work and understand it with pleasure as she reads? Does she "expose" the children to properly read, carefully chosen poetry? Does she select such poems as Tennyson's "The Revenge" to give them a thrilling word picture of the fight between the Spanish Armada and the lone British vessel? Does she hereby prove to her listeners that poetry is just as interesting as prose?

### *Oral Interpretation by Children*

But the child must have practice in interpreting for himself. Choric reading is one of the best ways for introducing the techniques of interpretation. Group activity is usually more appealing to the child, and perhaps one more phase of the aversion to poetry may be eliminated if the pupil is not asked to stand before the group and perform alone.

Each child should have his own mimeographed copy of the poem which is to be read. He should be allowed to mark it in any way he deems helpful to him as the teacher leads a discussion of its meaning. The group, with the teacher, should pick the "key" words of each idea, and paraphrase the idea until each child feels its meaning. The descriptive words should be noted; the ones with musical qualities pronounced to stress that quality. A slight pause on the key word or an inflection will set it apart to clarify its meaning. Note how this technique will help prevent the "sing-song" reading which children insist on giving to poetry.

The group under the teacher's direction and help can decide on the proper phrasing, where they think pauses should occur, where stress should be given and why. They should determine where the volume of the voice should change, and the reasons for that change. They should choose the words on which the voice may play—words that possess musical quality. The children should mark their copies accordingly and use for their own study.

Should not the teacher then read the poem to the group, interpreting it as they have planned? They will enjoy it and understand it. Only after this procedure are the pupils ready to learn it as a choric reading—phrase by phrase, idea by idea, until each verse completes itself.

One successful teacher of long experience said, "I have always believed that a children's singing chorus was the most beautiful thing in the world, but after hearing the beauty of the spoken chorus, I have changed my mind."

After several choric readings are treated as here suggested, the child has learned a technique to guide his interpretation of the poems which he will later study. Soon the day will come when he must be encouraged to bring his own favorite poem, or if, because of his aversion, he has none, he must be encouraged to find one he likes.

Books of poems—suitable to age groups—should be made available. If these appear too foreboding to some, there are many fine children's magazines which most schools have, that provide little gems of verse.

The child loves the verse because he understands it. He can interpret it for the group, and he will sense a sincere pleasure in trying to make others feel about it as he does.

Recognition of the child's selection must be given and diplomatically and constructively appraised. If his choice has

come from one of the books or magazines which the teacher has provided or suggested, there can be no doubt of its acceptability.

### *Devices for Appreciation.*

A splendid way of keeping pupils constantly "exposed" to poetry is by means of an attractive and appealing poetry corner. Here may be placed the child's selections. He will beam at the teacher's appreciation of his poem, and each pupil, in his secret desire to see whose poem "makes" the corner, will be looking at poems, seeking his own, and reading one because his pal's is posted there.

Some original poems from classes gone by may be posted. Watch the eagerness with which the present pupils look for their older brother's or sister's poem; note the elation and pride when a boy exclaims "Look here's my brother's poem!"

In the buildings fortunate enough to be equipped with microphone and loud speaker, the teacher can use it to great advantage. The microphone may be set up just outside the class room door and the child may broadcast his poem to the class. Poetry takes on glamor for even the boys!

This writer does not wish to leave the impression that the teacher should be satisfied when she has developed a taste for poetry in only the lighter, simpler vein. Rather, she wishes to stress that not enough teachers develop a love of poetry within the child by use of the simpler poems. Poetry is taught no differently than any other field of learning—one *must* begin with the less complicated, and step by step, work forward to a stage of more mature development. If the love of poetry is not instilled very early in life by the child's first teachers by means of such techniques and devices as here suggested, or any others deemed effective, then the true enjoyment of our masters is that much longer deferred. Only through proper training will

a pupil be ready to interpret and love "*The Odyssey, The Iliad, Lady of the Lake,*" much of Coleridge, Shelley, Wordsworth, etc., when he becomes of high school age.

When the teacher feels that her pupils are "poetic minded," when she senses that antagonism has fled, when she has taught them to become aware of the beauty of poetic rhythm, the music of the poetic world, then she may deem them ready for original poetry writing.

### *Studying Poetic Form*

A study of poetry pattern becomes necessary at this stage. It would seem wise to use some of the familiar poems learned in choric readings of the past. A study of the meter and resulting rhythms should be made. Keep this study as simple as possible by noting the accents or beats in a line. Note how many lines most verses have in simple poetry; note which endings rhyme. Most children have a keen sense of rhythm, and even as are some famous writers, they will be guided by the ear as to whether the line has sufficient beats to make it rhythmical.

Some pupils will try free verse, but unless the child who attempts it has great talent, such writing should not be encouraged, for it may be an effort to escape the pattern which calls for thought and study.

Point out from poems already enjoyed that because the poet seeks and uses highly descriptive and expressive words, he is able to say much in a few lines.

A choice of subjects for original poems can be the source of inspiration, or it can place a block before the child. He should be allowed to write, even as the masters, on the subjects he loves. What if he does write about football or his horse? If he is giving vent to an emotion in a rhythmical pattern, he is writing poetry. His poems will change with his interests and after sufficient practice and training, his poems will treat more



mature interests. The mistake of a teacher is in trying to force emotional response from a child on a topic which holds no feeling for him.

Such holidays as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter stimulate the emotions and bring forth splendid poems. These are days all children love, for one reason or another. These days hold memories for everyone, and the children find material dear to their hearts—material that stir poetic thoughts.

Perhaps a few key words will stimulate ideas: Manger, stranger—asleep, sheep—light, night—joy, Boy—star, afar. These words should come from the children and will do so on any subject which elicits feeling and interest.

In this writer's opinion, one of the greatest values of original poetry for young people—not to belittle the joy gained from the beautiful, nor the character development, nor the love of fine things acquired in poetry enjoyment—is the fact that the child will often say in a poem that which he does not care to express in prose. He bares his finer thoughts in poetry, when an open factual statement of the same might not be forth-coming.

Thus, from the pen of a thirteen year old boy comes the following:

#### POWER DIVE

When you push the stick forward  
And start into a dive,  
You wonder if you'll be killed  
Or come out alive  
As you near the ground  
And are whizzing through air,  
Perhaps you'll just think  
Or say a little prayer.

# Democracy: Fifth Grade Version

RUTH A. PUTNAM<sup>1</sup>

“WHAT DOES Democracy mean?” This question drew a barrage of blank looks from a group of fifth grade children. The word Democracy was a familiar term. They had heard it often on the radio. Older people talked about it. They knew of course that the form of government under which they lived was called a Democracy, but—*just what did democracy mean after all?*

Several weeks were spent in discussion and reading. *Democracy*, by Ryllis and Omar Goslin, proved especially helpful. The daily newspaper was eagerly scanned for articles, cartoons, etc., relating to democracy. Material of sufficient interest or merit was posted on the bulletin board.

After the children's concepts of democracy were considerably clarified, the teacher produced the papers on which the children had written their earlier ideas on the subject. Someone asked, “Couldn't we write about what we think democracy means *now?*” Real eagerness, in place of blank stares, met this suggestion. That clearer concepts concerning democracy had emerged was evident from these typical responses:

“Democracy means teamwork, people working together.”

“I know now what Democracy means, it means self-government and freedom—but *to have freedom you have to know how to use it.*”

“Democracy means that you can do what you want to *if you do the right things.* And if you don't you will have to do what somebody else tells you to do.”

“In a Democracy people have a right to have different opinions about things. You should be a good sport and listen to both sides in a debate.”

<sup>1</sup>Teacher in the Tyler School, Cedar Rapids, Ia.

"Democracy is just like a game. If everybody plays the game right it is a good game, but if somebody plays the game wrong it spoils the game."

Not all of the hazy ideas about Democracy were cleared up at this time, however. One boy said, rather wistfully,

"Democracy means that you can go fishing whenever you want to."

During the discussions which had taken place, the teacher was concerned to observe a strong tendency in the group to think of democracy as a sort of "glorified grab bag." The children seemed to think chiefly of the *privileges* of democracy, and were reluctant to mention, or consider, its *responsibilities*. To aid in counteracting this tendency a class Bill of Rights was evolved during several discussion periods, the class as a whole working with the teacher. An attempt was made to convince the children that every "right" which they considered theirs had its corresponding "duty."

A portion of their Bill of Rights is included here:

### MY RIGHTS

I have the right:

1. to express my own opinions. (To have my own ideas about things.)
2. to do what I want to do.

### MY DUTIES

I have the duty:

1. to think before I give an opinion, be willing to listen to the opinions of others and be willing to change mine if they have a better idea. I must be courteous when someone disagrees with me.
2. to be sure that what I want to do is not bad for me *or does not interfere with the rights of someone else.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 3. to decide some things for myself.       | 3. to think before I decide. I know that until I am grown up I cannot decide everything for myself. |
| 4. to go to school and learn about things. | 4. to study hard and not waste time.  |

The fact that rights and privileges in a democracy *must always be earned* seemed to make quite an impression on this group of children.

Thus far the emphasis had been placed on *finding out about democracy*. It seemed time to make the shift to *doing something about it*. A snappy eyed ten year old with pigtails summed it up one day when she said, "Democracy will never work if we just sit back and *talk!*" Under this impetus the class organized, electing a president, secretary, etc. Various home room duties were delegated to individuals considered capable of "accepting responsibility" and each member of the group felt that he had a definite part in something real and vital—*making democracy work!*

An evaluation of the results of this experiment in democratic living showed that this group had made marked progress in the following ways:

1. Growth in the ability to think problems through for themselves.
2. Heightened appreciation of the rights and opinions of others.
3. Increased evidence of initiative.
4. Greater exercise of self-discipline. It became a matter of pride to "tell *yourself* what to do."
5. An increased awareness of *individual responsibility* in a democracy.

# Children and Poetry

A. ELIZABETH JOHNSON<sup>1</sup>

THE CHIEF MERIT of our civilization is that we are practical, and our chief fault is that we are *too* practical. We have no mythology, no minstrelsy. Instead of Hercules, King Alfred or Robin Hood, we have for our heritage Tom Paine's book, *Common Sense*, and Benjamin Franklin who invented lightning rods, stoves, and accused poets of being "the waste paper of mankind."

Children are naturally fond of poetry. Most of them can be stirred by the words and swayed by the rhythm of a poem even when they are far from the full understanding of the deeper meanings.

Children, like poets, have much in common. To each, the world is always new—and experience is vivid and intense. Things seen, heard, and touched are full of meaning and significance. The poet uses the medium of metered words not only to convey information but to illuminate experience. His moods are easily communicated to children for they, too, are eager for experience, and find fruition and expression in those words in which the poet records his own personal experiences.

Most children have a pleasant introduction to poetry, and the teacher's concern should be to enhance the pleasure that the child derives from verse.

Many techniques and approaches might be employed in the classroom for the presentation of poetry—such as timeliness, circumstances, interests, etc. Our chief concern, however, is to establish appreciation by any means suitable to our particular group.

The transfer of thoughts, ideas, into permanent thought patterns is definitely experimental, but will surely produce ultimate merit if children are permitted to express themselves freely in poetic fashion.

<sup>1</sup>Maple Leaf School, Seattle, Washington.

In our fifth grade situation each of the techniques mentioned has possibly been used.

*Timeliness:*

Holidays, observance of special occasions, etc., are doubtless the most suggestive for the use and adaptation of verse.

*Interests:*

The children are always eager to exchange their thoughts on hobbies, pets, vacations, etc.

In one instance, we had been studying prehistoric animals, and the similarity of the hippopotamus to some of those monsters, was noted. As an outgrowth of this observation, one of the boys brought this poem:

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

(George R. Durston)

In the squidgy river,  
Down the ooze bank,  
Where the ripples shiver,  
And the reeds are rank.  
Where the purple Kippo  
Makes an awful fuss,  
Lives the hip-hip-hippo  
Hippo-pot-a-mus!  
Broad his back and steady;  
Broad and flat his nose;  
Sharp and keen and ready  
Little eyes are those.  
You would think him dreaming  
Where the mud is deep.  
It is only seeming—  
He is not asleep.  
Better not disturb him,  
There'd be an awful fuss  
If you touched the Hippo  
Hippo-pot-a-mus.



In turn, others were stimulated by the study of other selections dealing with animals in various classifications, habitat, and characteristics, such as the "Plaint of the Camel," "The Blind Men and the Elephant," etc.

The poetic situations produced by circumstances is doubtless one of the most interesting.

The question of honor had arisen in relationship to the behavior of certain members of the class. After the culprits had been reprimanded one of the accused presented the poem,

#### A MAN OF WORDS

*(Old Folk Rhyme)*

A man of words and not of deeds,  
Is like a garden full of weeds;  
And when the weeds begin to grow,  
It's like a garden full of snow:  
And when the snow begins to fall,  
It's like a bird upon the wall;  
And when the birds away do fly,  
It's like an eagle in the sky;  
And when the sky begins to roar,  
It's like a lion at the door;  
And when the door begins to crack;  
It's like a stick across your back;  
And when the stick begins to smart,  
It's like a penknife in your heart;  
And when your heart begins to bleed,  
You're dead, and dead, and dead, indeed.

A further example of poetic stimulation due to circumstances, arose from the discussion of the increase in the population along the west coast. One of the girls cited a shopping trip in which she was buffeting the crowds in the department stores. The merit of store was discussed. Thus, Linda proudly introduced "Hump, the escalators used as a means of transportation of shoppers within the Escalator" from one of her library books:

## HUMP, THE ESCALATOR

(Dorothy Faubion)

Hump, the escalator, slid  
 Out of the basement, yes he did!  
 Out of the basement unawares,  
 Flattened a moment, then made a stairs;  
 Made a stairs that moved and crawled  
 Up through a runaway, narrow-walled.  
 Dressed-up ladies and bothered men;  
 Here I stood on the floor  
 Then on a stair-step rising slow.  
 Over the heads of shoppers then—  
 Over the aisles of hats and hose—  
 Over the shelf-displays I rose:  
 Suddenly stood on the second floor,  
 Not a stairway any more.  
 Every rider ahead of me.  
 Took it stiffly and solemnly.  
 Nobody paid a penny's fare  
 Or knew they had ridden a Magic Stair.

Other bits of verse have inspired the children now that a consciousness has been established—but the most gratifying situations are those in which a ready response was given to the creation of original poems.

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The following mnemonics, by Harriet M. Johnson, appeared in the 1946 issue of *Word Study*:

1. You wouldn't believe a lie for a minute, but the word *believe* has a *lie* right in it.
2. Thinking *pie* when writing *piece* Helps your spelling problems cease.
3. That the *capitol* building contains an *o* The *O* shaped dome should help you to know. All other capitals end *al*—So that's an easy way to tell.

# Books on Speech Correction and Speech Improvement for Elementary School Teachers

DORATHY ECKELMANN<sup>1</sup>

1. Abney and Miniace. *This Way to Better Speech*, World Book Co., New York, 1940. (Less than \$1.) Word lists, sentences, and poems for classroom or clinic.
2. Ainsworth, Stanley. *Galloping Sounds*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1946. \$1.75. A series of stories loaded with sounds to be used as a method of stimulating sound to be taught. Elementary level.
3. Backus, Ollie. *Speech in Education, a Guide for the Classroom Teacher*. Longmans, Green, & Co. 1943 (A thick book containing material of much value for either the improvement or correction program.)
4. Baker, Pauline. *Primer of Sound: A Manual for Teachers*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1942. \$1.50. Exercises to be used in correcting the more common speech faults of elementary school children.
5. Barrows and Case. *Speech Drills for Children*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1929. \$1.00. Games and drill material.
6. Barrows and Cordts. *The Teacher's Book of Phonetics*. Ginn and Co., 1930. Clearcut basic treatment of speech difficulties and phonetics.
7. Barrows and Hall, *Games and Jingles for Speech Development*. Expression Co., 1936. \$1.00. Simplified description of speech correction with games and poems.
- ✓ 8. Barrows and Hall. *Jack in the Box*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., \$.75. Games and poems for young children with illustrated material. Can be used for either improvement or correction program.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Speech, Illinois State Normal University, Normal Ill. This article is a sequel to Miss Eckelmann's study in the December *Elementary English Review*.

9. Barrows and Livingston. *Speech Drills for Children in Form of Play*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., \$1.00. Drill to establish correct speech habits.
10. Bennett, Rodney. *First Steps in Speech Training*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., \$.85. An English publication which has very usable drill material for intermediate grades.
11. Bennett, Rodney. *The Play Way of Speech Training*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., \$1.75. A "how to do it" book with suggestions for self-training for the teacher. Class methods, and drill material. Suitable for elementary grades.
12. Berry and Eisonson. *The Defective in Speech*. F. S. Crofts, N. Y., 1942. \$3.00. Survey of defective in speech, explaining essential etiology and therapy. Exercises and bibliography.
13. Bryngelsen and Glaspey. *Speech Improvement Cards*. Scott-Foresman Co., N. Y., 1941. \$3.50. Attractive picture cards for diagnosis and drill. Booklet of games and suggestions for re-training. Very usable for speech or reading drill.
14. Cotrel and Halstead. *Class Lessons in Improving Speech*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1936. \$1.25. Suitable for speech improvement program in intermediate classroom.
15. Fairbanks. *Voice and Articulation Drillbook*. Harper and Bros., N. Y., 1939. \$1.00. Practical source of tests and drills for voice and articulation.
16. Finley and Scovel. *Speech and Play*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1940. \$.85. Rhymes and sketches for drill on sounds. (primary grades)
17. Keppie, Wedberg, and Kedar. *Speech Improvement Through Choral Reading*. Expression Co., 1942. \$2.50. In addition to selections arranged for choral reading, this book gives many helpful suggestions for improvement of voice, articulation, and interpretation.
18. Lloyd. *Our First Speech Book*. Newson and Co., N. Y., 1942. Selections arranged according to sounds for English speech for use in classroom. Primary grades. Could be used for clinical purposes, too.

19. McCullough. *Work and Practice Book for Speech Improvement*. Expression Co., \$1.75. A drill book on sounds most frequently defective. Intermediate and upper grades.
  20. Mulgrave, Dorothy I. *Speech for the Classroom Teacher*. N. Y., Prentice-Hall, 1946. A presentation for classroom teachers of the problems of speech with material and methods for speech improvement.
  21. National Association of Teachers of Speech. *Guides to Speech Training in the Elementary School*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1944. \$2.25. Covers a wide range of the speech problems of the average classroom with suggestions as to principles and methods.
  22. Robbins and Robbins. *Correction of Speech Defects of Early Childhood*. Expression Co., 1937. \$1.25. A drill book for parents and teachers of young children.
  23. Schoolfield. *Better Speech and Better Reading*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1937. \$1.75. Good word lists, sentences, poems Usable for all ages.
  24. Stoddard, Clara. *Sounds for Little Folks*. Expression Co., Magnolia, Mass., 1940. \$2.00. Book of pictures for primary and elementary classes in speech improvement and correction.
  25. Van Riper. *Speech Correction*. Prentice-Hall. N. Y., 1939. \$2.50. Excellent and most practical treatment of the field in language and terminology which the layman can understand.
  26. West, Kennedy, and Carr. *The Rehabilitation of Speech*. Harper and Brothers, N. Y., 1936. Technical in approach and treatment. Good sections on remedial procedures with older children, foreign dialect, and elementary school children.
  27. Wood, Alice, *The Jingle Book*. E. P. Dutton Co., N.Y., 1940. A book of poems for drills on sounds.
  28. Walsh, Gertrude. *Sing Your Way to Better Speech*. Upper grades and high school. E. P. Dutton, N. Y., 1939. \$2.50.
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# Freedom of Speech

BERENICE R. RUTHERFORD<sup>1</sup>

**F**REEDOM OF SPEECH! We must have freedom of speech! In a democracy freedom of speech is basic and it is our birthright. What do we mean by freedom of speech? Does everyone have freedom of speech?

Speech should be thought of as the major avenue through which the total personality, physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially, expresses itself.<sup>2</sup> Physically the personality expresses itself through movement in the speech of gesture, picture and sign. Emotionally, expression comes through sounds and words as well as through physical signs. Intellectually, expression may be implicit speech as in thinking, or it may be through overt speech manifested in talking and in language. Socially, expression is seen in man's speech efforts to adjust to others and in his speech attempts to coordinate and correlate the diverse human activities.

Speech is probably the most common and fundamental tool used in communication.<sup>3</sup> The Educational Policies Commission in 1938 recognized the ability to talk as one of the objectives of self realization. In *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy* (1938, p. 54) the Commission says, "It has been estimated that speech is basic in 90 per cent of all communications." In the last few years, relatively speaking, some of the most powerful factors for education which have been invented such as the telephone, the talkies, and the radio, have speech for the medium. Some form of speech, it would seem, is basic to the life and happiness of the individual.

What are some of the educational activities involving this tool? Speech is a factor in mental development. Ideas are formed in unvocalized words and then put into vocalized words for oral expression.

<sup>1</sup>Speech clinician, Minneapolis Public Schools.

<sup>2</sup>Speech Correction in Practice. Minneapolis Public Schools, 1945.

<sup>3</sup>Magdalene Kramer, Report of the Elementary Committee of the National Association of Teachers of Speech, 1943.



Formation of ideas, however limited in scope, means mental activity and probable mental growth. Thinking is done in terms of language. Monroe says that "learning to read involves speech and language as well as vision and visual perception." Learning to read involves learning printed symbols for reading and the understanding and use of speech symbols associated with the reading symbols. Speech also is considered basic to spelling. For example, if a child says shicken for chicken he probably will spell chicken with an "sh" instead of "ch." Also it has been observed that letters which are not vocalized in the pronunciation of a word, the so-called silent letters, may be omitted in the spelling of that word. Here again knowledge, understanding and use of printed and oral symbols are necessary as a background for learning to spell. The spoken word, it would seem, is the principal channel of receiving and giving information, and exchanging ideas and feelings.

Curriculums stress teaching children how to put their thoughts into words. A basic aim in education is to give opportunities for effective oral expression in functional situations. Such aims and stresses indicate a fine trend. But what about the opportunity to acquire the *ability* to talk freely, unimpeded by some speech difference such as stuttering speech, cleft palate speech, cerebral palsy speech, or lateral emissions?

In a recent survey of metropolitan cities<sup>4</sup> only 6 cities out of 39 reported that they have a satisfactory speech program for children needing specific help in acquiring ability to use speech. Perhaps this number would be slightly increased if all cities, towns, and villages were to report on programs meeting the speech needs of America's children. There seems to be no good reason that the opportunity to gain this ability to communicate orally sans impediment should not be more generally included as a definite part of instruction in American schools. In many states state aid is available for such purposes.

Frustration in this important phase of communication may, and often does, lead to undesirable deviations in personality develop-

<sup>4</sup>*Journal of Speech Disorders*, Vol. II (1946), pp. 131-134.

ment. The individual may not recognize the relationship, but a study of his behavior should readily disclose the frustration. Behavior must be recognized as symptomatic or as caused by something. Here again, schools are denying to children opportunity to develop their personalities to capacity. Schools teach a child to understand the behavior of the sun, but there is very little opportunity for him to learn to understand behavior of himself. The child acquires attitudes, understandings, and behavior patterns necessary for the preservation and extension of democracy and all its institutions, with the exception of the greatest of all American institutions, the child himself. The individual, the child, is given little opportunity to learn why he behaves as he does. Is it not important for himself and for society that he should know that acquiring undesirable attention by being a bully, a braggart, or a recluse is a poor substitute for facing his speech problem and handling it objectively? Is it not important that he should have the opportunity to correct the speech deviation that is hindering his progress toward self realization?

There is some provision for correction of speech differences in elementary school children. But in most junior and senior high schools few persons with defective speech are given the opportunity to develop skills to understand and cope with their speech problems. Corrective speech programs need to be extended and expanded, and more such programs inaugurated.

In our curriculum planning of today, consideration must be given to the preventive and developmental speech programs, as well as to the corrective speech program. Speech per se is a learned process. The kind of speech sounds a child learns will depend upon the speech sound which he hears, and upon the functioning ability of the speech apparatus. The kind of speech sounds he hears will be determined in part by the speech patterns which people in his environment give him. This suggests that part of the prevention program should be adult education. Other preventive measures should include a program of mental health. There should be an

observation program which should furnish information that will be of value in determining the child's varied needs.

The developmental program should include presentation of speech patterns and speech information geared to the child's level of development. This program should be of such a nature that it could be administered at home as well as in school.

Is education in America providing children with a chance to develop untrammelled speech? Is education providing opportunity for some children to express themselves, but withholding the opportunity from others? Is education providing speech and behavior patterns which will accrue to the development of satisfactory speech and behavior patterns in the child? Is education providing the kind of speech program that will prevent formation of unsatisfactory speech patterns? Or is the curriculum planned around the child who talks freely and easily? Are these children who have freedom of speech given opportunity to have more freedom of speech? Will the children who, because of defective speech, do not have freedom of speech, have fewer opportunities because of less ability to talk?

*You get what you pay for.* "It is true that the amount spent to run a classroom does not wholly determine quality of schooling. Good education may be had in some classrooms financed at a poverty level and poor education may go on in a magnificent building. These are exceptions, however. It is obvious that a board of education with only \$100 or even \$500 with which to buy schooling for a class of thirty children for a year can purchase less education than can be bought for \$4000, \$5000, or \$6000 a year. In the long run, in education as in automobiles, one gets about what he pays for."

SOURCE: Unfinished Business in American Education—an Inventory of Public School Expenditures in the United States by John K. Norton and Eugene S. Lawler. Copies of the booklet may be obtained from the American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington 6, D. C., Price \$1.00.

# Look and Listen

Edited by LILLIAN NOVOTNY<sup>1</sup>

Education still lags in achieving a full utilization of all the tools at its command. In addition to budget limitations, the busy educator frequently does not have the time to seek out new devices. This column is presented in the hope that it may prove useful to you in providing current news in the field of audio-visual aids. Your suggestions on information and material you would like to see carried on these pages would be greatly welcomed. If you have devised successful methods in utilizing these educational tools, won't you share them with others? Write and tell us about them. L. N.

## Films

Mr. Joseph Dickman, Assistant Director of Visual Aids, Chicago Public Schools, reiterated in a recent interview some of the basic principles involved in the use of visual aids.

First, the *instructional film* (a term considered better than *educational film*) is one that is on some area of subject matter that is important enough to be considered part of the curriculum. It ought to do something that the teacher could not otherwise do, and enable the youngster to insure an experience that he will remember. Among the advan-

tages of the instructional film are: the *use of picture language*; *animation*, which is simply making drawings move; *re-creation of the past*; *bringing the world into the classroom*; *slow motion photography*, which provides for more careful observation; *time-lapse photography*, which is used most effectively to show processes such as that of a flower bud unfolding, the growth of seeds, or the development of a cumulus cloud; and the *close-up view*, which enables the child in the last seat to see more clearly than a child in the front seat could see the original.

In the technique of using films, the following progressive steps are recommended:

1. Motivation, by setting up objectives
2. Showing the film
3. Discussion—either oral or written
4. Showing the film a second time, with the sound track turned off. This enables the teacher to carry on a running commentary, and explain the questions raised by the children during the discussion.

<sup>1</sup>Miss Novotny, a teacher in the Chicago Public Schools, is a member of the Council's Committee on Radio and Photoplay, and was formerly a member of the Chicago Radio Council.

The sound film is primarily and basically a *classroom tool*. Most schools use it in the auditorium because they say that the weight and care of the projector becomes too much of a problem when it is transported from one room to another. Another objection frequently heard is that the classroom cannot be adequately darkened, whereas the auditorium can. It has been found, however, that a glass-beaded screen used in a classroom darkened with the ordinary shades is adequate, and the results measured in terms of pupil interest and motivation more than compensate for the difficulties involved in moving the projector.

Film is expensive, and school budgets are rather limited; but the general consensus seems to be that fewer films properly used and integrated with the course of study are of far greater value than many films that are simply displayed and not utilized. In the larger school systems, films may be purchased in quantities so that they are available on demand. In Chicago, for example, a minimum of 35 copies is considered adequate. At an average cost of \$45.00 for each black and white film, and \$75 for each colored film, the cost of maintaining an adequate film library becomes apparent: six hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of in-

structional films—prints of 877 different motion pictures—comprise the film library of the Chicago Public School; and San Diego announces seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth available for use in its schools.

However, in smaller communities and in county areas, cooperative planning is becoming increasingly popular because it affords each member of the group a greater selection of films, and provides for having them on hand when they are needed. Encyclopedia Britannica Films offers a very fine cooperative plan which can be financed through the budget over a three year period during which the cost is spread over lease payments until the film becomes the property of the school. This plan has recently been adopted by seven schools in Warren County, Illinois, it was announced by Verne C. Conway, county superintendent. Fifty-three sound and six silent films were bought jointly by schools in Alexis, Kirkwood, Monmouth, and Roseville. The library will be housed in Conway's office in Monmouth.

Various publishers are beginning to provide supplementary work sheets for students as well as teacher manuals to accompany the films. The advantage is obvious: the student must do the work, because he is



forced to react mentally. The *Visual Learning Guide* which accompanies each Encyclopedia Britannica film includes a page which the student is to study before viewing the film (background material, things to look for in the film, and words and phrases that must be known to understand the film), an objective test on what was seen and heard in the film, and a page devoted to suggestions for follow-up activities. The *Teacher's Handbook* which accompanies this, includes in addition to suggestions for activities, a synopsis of the content, as well as the actual film continuity.

From the Department of Studio and Public Service, Motion Picture Association of America, Inc., 5504 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood 28, California, comes an announcement of the Children's Film Library. This is the joint understanding of three non-member and seven member companies of the Motion Picture Association, designed to supply a special series of feature films for showing to children on Saturday morning theatre programs. Subjects now available at the exchanges include such old favorites as *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Hoosier Schoolboy*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*,

*Young Buffalo Bill*, and *The Prince and the Pauper*. Mr. Eric Johnston, President of the Motion Picture Association, said, "If the parents will encourage the screening of these pictures at Saturday shows, their children, I believe, will be enriched in literature, adventure, phantasy, and fun. We present The Children's Film Library with that in mind." If parents in your community are interested in further information, have them write to the above address.

Six new one-reel sound movies are now available from *Coronet Magazine*, 919 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago 11, Illinois. Titles include: *We Discover the Dictionary*, *Spelling is Easy*, *Ancient World Inheritance*, *Know Your Library*, *Beginning Tumbling*, and *How to Study*.

### Filmstrips

This visual device was in use before the war, but more extensive use of the filmstrip as a teaching aid was given impetus by its successful adoption as part of the armed forces' training program. Actually, the filmstrip is simply a series of 25 mm. stills, and each individual film within the strip is called a frame. A regular filmstrip projector is used for showing the film. Its particular value lies in the fact that each picture may be held on the screen for



an indefinite period so that the teacher has an opportunity for discussion. Filmstrip projection is simple and highly recommended. A listing of available films in the Elementary English field follows.

The Audio-Visual Division of the Popular Science Publishing Company, 353 Fourth Avenue, New York City 10, offers *All Aboard the Punctuation Express*, a series of 6 filmstrips at \$5.00 per filmstrip, or \$30.00 per set. Appropriate for the elementary grades, these strips dramatize abstract conceptions through the use of cartoon figures and other visible techniques. Titles include: The Comma—Part I; The Comma—Part II; The Comma—Part III; Colon, Semicolon and Dash; Apostrophe; Quotation Marks. Each filmstrip consists of approximately 40 frames.

Curriculum Films, Radio City, New York City 20, has available a series of 10 filmstrips in color: four on spelling, three on vocabulary, and three on grammar. \$50.00. Titles include:

### Spelling

1. Let's Look into Some of the Problems
2. Seeing, Hearing, and Spelling
3. How to Develop Aids for Remembering
4. Use of the Dictionary in Spelling

### Grammar

1. Subject and Predicate
2. Modifiers—Adjectives and Adverbs
3. Nouns

### Vocabulary Building

1. The Importance of Vocabulary in Communication
2. Words and Their Background
3. How to Develop a Good Vocabulary

Curriculum Films (see above) also lists a series of 15 filmstrips in color recommended for primary grades reading of favorite children's stories. \$22.00. Titles include: *The Animal Musicians*; *Change About*; *Cinderella*; *The Fisherman's Wife*; *The Gingerbread Boy*; *Jack and the Beanstalk*; *Lazy Jack*; *Mr. Vinegar*; *Peter Rabbit*; *The Pied Piper*; *Puss in Boots*; *Rumpelstiltskin*; *Three Billy Goats Gruff*; *Thumbelina*; *The Ugly Duckling*.

Encyclopedia Britannica Films, Inc., 20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Illinois, lists a series entitled *Children of Many Lands*, designed to be used with, or separately from the instructional motion pictures on which they are based. Series of 8 filmstrips, \$21.60 - 10% discount per set; \$3.00 - 10% discount per filmstrip. Titles include: *Children of China* (66 frames); *Mexican Chil-*

dren (71 frames); Eskimo Children (68 frames); Navajo Children (68 frames); Children of Switzerland (68 frames); French-Canadian Children (68 frames); Children of Holland (72 frames); Colonial Children (62 frames). Each filmstrip has three main parts: introduction, main subject material, and review with suggested projects. Division into sections provides natural stopping places for class discussions. Attention is called to traditional and environmental influences on daily living. These should provide excellent background material for extensive reading.

Pictorial Films, Inc., Radio City 20, New York, presents new additions to *The Classics Series*, designed to stimulate interest and to supplement the reading of popular classics. In color, approximately 100 frames. \$9.75. New titles include: Alice in

Wonderland, Rip Van Winkle, The Odyssey.

Society for Visual Education, Inc., 100 E. Ohio Street, Chicago, Illinois, supplies a series entitled *An Introduction to 19th Century American Literature*, listed as suitable for Junior and Senior High School in presenting material on the activities and writings of American authors. 35 frames—\$2.00. Authors include Washington Irving, William Cullen Bryant, James Fennimore Cooper, Walt Whitman, Edgar Allen Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, Mark Twain, and others.

[Next month this department will discuss radio programs, recordings, equipment, and publications on audio-visual education.]

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Have you seen Edgar Dale's excellent new book, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*? It is published by Dryden Press (New York) at \$4.25 list.

## Review and Criticism

[The reviews in this issue are by Phyllis Fenner, Ivah Green, Katharyn E. Hodapp, M. E. Kier, Hannah M. Lindahl, Helen R. Sattley, Dorothy E. Smith, Jean Gardiner Smith, and Latourette Stockwell. Unsigned reviews are by the editor.]

### *For Young Children*

*The Tale of the Fly.* By Vitaly Bianchi. Illustrated by Y. Vassnetsov. Translation by N. Orloff. Colonial House, \$1.00.

Have you ever heard of an animal having a tail simply to make him more beautiful? The unhappy fly in this Russian folk tale had numerous experiences in her search for a tail to make herself more beautiful. The somewhat distorted illustrations keep the fly in the foreground during her useless search. The story and illustrations will be enjoyed by children from kindergarten age through fourth grade. Anyone with a limited budget might rightly question the justification of the price of this book.

M. E. K.

*Angel Child.* By Val Teal. Pictures by Pelagie Doane. Rand McNally & Company \$1.00.

This imaginative story of Peter and Patty finding Angel Child and the experiences they enjoyed with

Angel Child before his disappearance will delight most small children—especially those who are anticipating the arrival of a new baby. The illustrations are colorful and realistic. Ages 3-5.

M. E. K.

*The Shy Little Kitten.* Pictures by Gustaf Tenggren. Story by Cathleen Shurr. Simon and Shuster, \$0.25.

Another one of the little Golden Books for early grade children, with just enough text to explain the intriguing colored illustrations.

*The Baker's Dozen.* By Rosa Van Rosen. Illustrated by Barbara Latham. Appleton-Century, \$1.50.

Fat, jolly Volckert Jan Pietersen Van Amsterdam, baker extraordinary in Albany in 1655, learned the hard way that thirteen is a baker's dozen. It is a lively story gaily illustrated in black and pink, a cheerful addition to any child's collection of picture books.

D. E. S.

*Charcoal.* Written and illustrated by Lloyd Coe. Crowell, \$1.00.

Charcoal was a very black sheep both in color and in deed. Even when he white-washed himself, he found it was still much fun to push his cousins into the prickly blackberry bushes. He finally learned that good deeds

and not the color of the wool make the difference. A moral tale with absurd illustrations. Grades 2-3. J. G. S.

*Smoky: The Little Kitten Who Didn't Want To.* By Nancy Raymond. Pictures by Dirk. The Fidler Co., \$.75.

Smoky was an obstinate, little kitten who didn't want to do what he should do. Strange to say, he didn't even want to drink his milk. But after doing just what he wished during a day's visit to other animals on the farm, he learned to comply. The attractive illustrations, as well as the brief narrative, will appeal to children of pre-school age. H. M. L.

*Grabby Pup.* By Nancy Raymond. Pictures by Dirk. The Fidler Co., \$.75.

Stories of pets are always favorites. Grabby, a mischievous puppy who grabs anything and everything, will win the affection of young children who follow his antics in this lively story with its attractive illustrations. When Grabby loses all his friends because of his grabbiness, he becomes lonely and unhappy. Children will rejoice when he learns the important lesson that helps him to regain his friendship. H. M. L.

*Johnny Cottontail.* By Margaret Friskey. Pictures by Lucia Patton. David McKay, \$1.00.

The charming humor in the il-

lustrations and the lively narrative in this little volume make it a most pleasing book to read to young children and add to the library table in primary grades. Taking care of four baby rabbits who had no mother kept Johnny Cottontail busy and happy. Children will be interested in hearing what he taught the little rabbits and what happened to Pete, the most adventurous one in the group.

H. M. L.

*The Store at Crisscross Corners.* By Marjorie Medary. Illustrated by Janet Smalley. Abbingdon-Cokesbury Press, \$1.00.

This humorous story of how a topsy-turvy store was put in order by making use of the alphabet will delight young children. Rapid action, simplicity of style and attractive, colorful pictures contribute to the charm of this book. H. M. L.

*For the Middle Years*  
*Adventures of Midgie.* By Ralph Devoe. Illustrated by Nils Hogner. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., \$1.50.

Big Bill loved Midgie best of all his pets. This exciting story of Midgie, the duck, will delight any boy or girl who loves suspense, adventure and the dangers encountered in mountain climbing, as well as the boy and girl who is interested in training animals. Ralph Devoe with

his sportsman's interest in animals and fair play, has interestingly portrayed this sequel to *Calling All Ducks*. The magnificent illustrations by Nils Hogner and this delightful story leave one with a great desire for More! M. E. K.

*The Lollypop Factory and Lots of Others*. by Mary Elting. Pictures by Jeanne Pendick. Doubleday & Co., \$2.00.

What happens inside a factory can be as interesting as any made up story! The Hows and Whys are answered in this (picture) book trip through numerous factories that make lollypops, pencils, automobiles, sweaters, dolls, pop and ice cream. The illustrations and the real information are interesting to everyone and should appeal to the middle grade children, especially boys who are not especially interested in other books. Even primary children would benefit from hearing the stories.

M. E. K.

*Pocahontas*. By Ingri & Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$2.50.

Pocahontas, another story of America for Americans by the d'Aulaires, will thrill young readers as they enjoy the exciting experiences of Pocahontas and her pale face friends in the woods of Virginia. The characters recreated in real d'Aulaire

style are authentic, and the illustrations are lovely color lithographs that all children adore. Ages 9-14.

M. E. K.

*The Arabian Nights*. Illustrated by Earle Goodenow. Grosset and Dunlap, \$3.00.

This DeLuxe edition of the popular classic in the Illustrated Junior Library has numerous full color illustrations, attractive binding, and clear large typography, and is provided with plastic slip case.

*Robinson Crusoe*. By Daniel Defoe. Illustrated by Lynd Ward. Grosset and Dunlap, \$2.00. (Boxed.)

*Adventures of Pinocchio*. By Carlo Collodi. With illustrations by Fritz Kredel. Translated by M. A. Murray. Grosset and Dunlap, \$2.00.

Illustrated Junior Library editions of well-known children's classics, profusely illustrated with full color pictures and pen and ink drawings. Very attractive.

*Bayou Boy*. Written and illustrated by Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Morrow, \$2.00.

Everyday experiences in the life of a little Negro boy in Louisiana. Told without the device of dialect, it becomes a story of family life with the small adventures which loom large on a six year old's horizon. Grades 3-5.

J. G. S.

*Miss Pennyfeather and the Pooka.*

By Eileen O'Faolain. Pictures by Aldren Watson. Random House, \$2.00.

It was the lucky day, indeed, that Jerry the coachman came by Mickey Joe—as darlin' a horse as ever was found in Ireland. But Garret guessed the secret and told it to his sister Julie: that Mickey Joe was no mortal horse, but was a pooka. And it was the sad May Sunday, indeed, the children and Miss Pennyfeather and Jerry chose to go to Blarney. Mickey Joe heard the call of the fairy horns, remembered he was a fairy horse, and answering the call, fell into the hands of the cruel White Knight. But the four mortals who loved him saved the pooka from the disgrace of losing the great race. As a reward for winning, Mickey Joe was released to the land of mortals again. A read-aloud book for grades four to six. J. G. S.

*Fun With Story Friends.* By W. W.

Theisen and Guy L. Bond. Pictures by George Annand. Macmillan.

This is a book of supplementary reading for grades three to five and for older children who are slow readers. Some rapid readers in the second grade will enjoy these stories of story-land animals, stories from faraway lands, stories about pets, stories of cities and country, stories that never

grow old, just for fun stories, and stories of Indian children. The book includes a list of other books children might like to read and a word list.

*The Tiger and the Rabbit.* By Pura Belpre. Illustrated by Kay Peterson Parker. Houghton, Mifflin, \$1.75.

Story-tellers and story-listeners will welcome this collection of Puerto Rican folktales. The stories are cast in the familiar mould that proves that folks are folks everywhere in the world. Here are tales of kings and beautiful princesses, of animals that talk as they always do in fables; here, too, are the simple repetitive tales, as well as those of spiritual significance. Well-known types, yes; but told in a manner that reflects the warmth and sunshine of the tropics. The black and white drawings that illustrate each of the fifteen stories are in complete harmony with the text. Perhaps when wartime restrictions have been entirely removed it will be possible to reprint the book on paper of a better quality. It deserves the best. D. E. S.

*The People Upstairs.* By Phyllis Cote.

Illustrated by the author. Doubleday, \$2.00.

A sweet and simple story of Judy, who wanted the Ashleys to be the people to live upstairs. Because Mr.



Ashley taught dramatics and Mrs. Ashley had once been an actress, Gramp didn't think they were fit to occupy the upstairs apartment. But Judy worked hard to show Gramp he was mistaken and the book ends happily. Third to fifth grade girls.

H. R. S.

*Too Many Dogs.* By Quail Hawkins.

Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Holiday House, \$1.50.

Good black and white illustrations are numerous in this story of how a boy gets his two dearest wishes, —a dog and a bicycle. But too many dogs lead to complications and neighborhood troubles. The story abounds with many slangy expressions that add nothing to either the story's interest or its literary worth.

I. G.

*For Early Adolescents*

*Dragon Prows Westward.* By William

H. Bunce. Illustrated by Lorence Bjorklund. Harcourt, \$2.00.

An adventure tale of the Vikings in America, and of the friendship of a Norse boy and the Wapanaki. The story moves swiftly and yet has interesting glimpses of life among the Indians. Should be useful in back-grounding pre-Columbian days along the eastern seaboard. Grades 6-9.

J. G. S.

*Paul Revere: Boy of Old Boston.* By

Augusta Stevenson. Illustrated by Paul Laune. Bobbs-Merrill, \$1.50.

Children in the middle grades will follow with keen interest the author's clear and exciting portrayal of the adventures of young Paul Revere. The lad's courage, his ingeniousness in escaping the British redcoats, and his patriotic services as a messenger will stir the imagination and bring satisfaction to the youthful reader of today. Simplicity characterizes the black and white illustrations. The volume is a worthy addition to the series, *Childhood of Famous Americans.*

H. M. L.

*The Angry Planet.* By John Keir

Cross. Illustrated by the author. Doubleday, \$2.00.

From notes and records of the two men and two children who made the remarkable trip to Mars in the space ship, *Albatross*, this book has been compiled. On Mars, they discovered various species of highly developed plant life which communicated, slept, and fought wars among themselves in ways akin to the Earth's inhabitants. An intriguing account for the thoughtful reader interested in scientific fantasies. The manner of presentation—as if from real records, etc.—will slow up the child interested in the merely sensational.

H. R. S.

*Dandelion Cottage.* By Carrol Wat-

son Rankin. Illustrated by Mary Stevens. Henry Holt, \$2.00.

An unused, dilapidated three-room cottage is rented to four girls—ages 11 to 14, for the summer, as a reward for their digging up all the dandelions around it. Their furnishing it with the family discards and their joys and troubles are all simply but entertainingly told. Characters are real and situations are not overdrawn. This simple, charming story will have real appeal to all girls who ever played house and wanted a real playhouse—in other words, every girl.

I. G.

*In Sunshine and Shadow.* By Edgar Allen Poe. Adapted by Lou P. Bunce. Edited by Mabel Dodge Holmes. College Entrance Book Co., \$1.53.

The best stories of Poe simplified and modernized for use in high school and college classes. The adaptation is well done, some of the longer philosophical discussions omitted and longer descriptive passages shortened making the stories more easily read by modern readers. Make up is good, print excellent and head pieces carry out the themes of the stories.

K. E. H.

*Topflight: Famous American Women.* Edited and with an introduction by Anne Stoddard. Illustrated by Bela Dankovsky. Thomas Nelson, \$2.50.

One of the interests of young folks from Junior High on up is in

people who do things. This is a collection of stories about women who have done things, and in most cases, are still doing them. Each story has been written by a different person so that quality of writing varies. Some have a quicker tempo than others; some are more interesting subjects than others. It includes such professions as acting, writing, photography, radio, dress designing. It includes such people as Mary Lewis, Katherine Cornell and Marion Anderson. Whether the collection has included the most outstanding and interesting people in the different fields is the only question in my mind. Perhaps it doesn't matter. Perhaps it shows how one gets there in each, and the struggle that went on. It is the *Girls Who Did* sort of thing brought up to date.

P. F.

The Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of January, 1947 are: For boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age: *Pocahontas* by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire, Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$2.50. For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *Old Con and Patrick* by Ruth Sawyer, The Viking Press, Inc., \$2.00. For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Madelcine Takes Command* by Ethel C. Brill, Whittlesey House \$2.00. For older boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *The Angry Planet* by John Keir Cross, Doubleday, \$2.00.

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